

# Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

## News and notes on Newfoundland and Labrador's Intangible Cultural Heritage Program

April-May 2013  
ISSN 1918-7408

[ich@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:ich@heritagefoundation.ca)  
Heritage Foundation of NL



### In this Issue:

- Page 1 Wells and Springs Job
- Page 2 Shearing Sheep
- Page 3 Make & Break Session
- Page 4 Quidi Vidi Summer Project
- Page 5 A Trip to South East Bight
- Page 6 Helicopter Memorial
- Page 7 The Year in ICH

## Researching Wells and Springs

Memorial's Department of Folklore and the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador are hiring a researcher to work on their "Traditional Knowledge of Springs and Wells in the St. John's Area" project. The project is designed to map locational information and to collect oral histories about wells, springs and natural water sources within the St. John's Area. It will research the location and associated knowledge of springs, wells, water diviners, spouts,

wishing wells, rag wells, traditional knowledge about water purity and cleanliness, techniques to prevent fouling of water sources, and traditional values around drinking water. This research will focus on three main concepts related to water sources and traditional management of those resources: geospatial knowledge about the resource; knowledge about use and management of the resources; and local values about those resources.

The applicant must have excellent oral and written communication skills; be curious, outgoing and willing to talk to property owners and local informants; have experience in conducting folklore or oral history interviews; and have training (preferably at the graduate level) in Folklore, Archaeology, Cultural Geography, History or another related field. Valid driver's license and use of automobile, and previous experience with a heritage organization is an asset. Someone willing to get wet and dirty is a bonus!

Work will be based out of the offices of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's, and will begin as soon as possible after the closing date for applications, running approximately through July to October 2013. Please send cv and cover letter by June 21st to:

**Philip Hiscock, Department of Folklore  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St John's NL A1B 3X8**

or by email to [philip@mun.ca](mailto:philip@mun.ca)

*Photo: Father Duffy's Well, circa 1948, courtesy Provincial Archives VA 15D-28.3*

## Isn't Nature Wonderful! Sheep Shearing with Tolson Rendell

*By Lisa Wilson*

Once a year at the end of May, Tolson Rendell of Heart's Content shears the sheep in his herd. This task needs to be done before they are put out to pasture, where they will graze freely for the summer months. When I visited him to watch the shearing, he selected one of three sheep that still needed to get done before the weekend, when the animals would be transported. Before he got to work, I asked if he could recall how learned about shearing. He thought back and said, "Yea, I do so. I remember seeing an old lady by the name of Mrs. Eva George shearing one just like I'm doing, only she had him on the ground. I nearly lost my mind-- I wasn't very old when I seen her do that, probably seven or eight. 50 years ago for sure. That was right out on the point from the lighthouse. She used to have her own sheep."



Tolson chose Black to work on, a new mother of three spirited lambs, each sporting their mother's signature black legs and face. To begin the procedure, Tolson and I lifted Black onto a table and then I watched while Tolson tied two of her legs together. While she still occasionally struggled to get away, this helped to keep the animal from running. Tolson then began using a pair of scissors to carefully cut away her wool, as close to the skin as possible. When I asked why he uses scissors rather than electric shears, he said, "To me, fellers can do it faster, but I just got my own way of doing it. I've been at it for years and I don't change it. ... I don't believe in them. I'm actually nervous about them to tell you the truth. I think I'm an old fashioned person and I can't help it. It's just the old way of life, the old way of doing stuff." He also explained that with electric shears it's much easier to tear the skin, and being gentle with the animal is a priority for Tolson. Having respect for the animals is an important part of how he practices this animal rearing tradition.

It takes Tolson just over two hours to fully shear a sheep, and he makes sure to do a thorough job. He first started learning about animals in 1967/68 from his grandfather. He explained, "I got in with the butchers years ago and my grandfather was a butcher and he done all his own like I'm doing." As he was working on Black, he described his shearing process: "What I do, I go right down to her backbone. I take her from here to the center of her chest, roll that right back to her backbone, and then when I've got everything back to her leg back there and everything rolled back, I take all that off and put it in bag. Then I untied these legs and flip her over. So when I'm going up, I'm going up the other side of her back and the wool is leaning toward me instead of hauling on it. It's a slow process. It's not good to say that it's fast, because it's not."



Rearing sheep for food is a local tradition that only Tolson and his longtime friend Jack Smith still practice in Heart's Content. While the shearing is mostly done alone, Tolson relies on help from Jack to transport the sheep to the pasture. "If it wasn't for Jack! Me and him been together a long time. Me and him carried all his sheep to pasture the Saturday morning past, the 25th, I think." When I asked if Jack had been keeping sheep for a long time, Tolson said, "Yes, him and his father before him, I even bought animals off his father years ago. Norman Smith, we called him Uncle Norm." Tolson himself has been raising animals for 45 years and admits that it takes a great deal of commitment and hard work to do it properly, which he believes is part of the reason why it has been going out of practice.




Tolson's love for his animals really came through when he was talking about how he feels about the animal rearing tradition. As he gets older, Tolson wonders what what will happen to this tradition, and hopes that it can continue long after he is gone. While he is still at it, he does the best job he possibly can. While gently cutting away the wool, he explained his philosophy around this work: "I'm taking my time because I don't want to cut her up. You can go nuts with anything and cut it all. Like when you're skinning sheep, hides, if you're not doing a good job you're going to cut it and fool it all up. I don't believe in that. Rushing. I got no time for rushing at nothing!"



He then took a break to look out at the many newborn animals bounding around the yard. I couldn't help but notice how happy Tolson was in that moment. "Isn't nature wonderful," he said, and began working again until the job was done.

*Photos by Lisa Wilson.*



**Wooden Boat Museum**  
of Newfoundland and Labrador

**TWO STROKE MARINE ENGINE**

INFORMATION SESSION & DEMONSTRATIONS  
IN PREPARATION FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS

WHEN: JUNE 29TH, 2013

TIME: STARTING AT 10AM  
PLEASE BRING A BOXED LUNCH, COFFEE AND  
TEA WILL BE PROVIDED.

WHERE: THE WOODEN BOAT MUSEUM OF NL  
WINTERTON, NL

INFORMATION ON BOAT BUILDING  
WORKSHOPS AND A TOUR OF THE  
MUSEUM WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED  
FOR THOSE INTERESTED.

**NO COST FOR INITIAL SESSION!**

CALL TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT  
BEVERLY AT 583-2070 OR BKINGHERITAGE@GMAIL.COM  
JENNIFER AT 583-2044 OR JENN.WOODENBOATMUSEUM@GMAIL.COM

## Memories of Quidi Vidi Stories of a Village Within a City

*By Joelle Carey*

A unique village lies within the boundaries of our city and dates back to between the 16th and 17th century. Quidi Vidi Village is located on the East End of our historic city and boasts a sheltered harbour which is still used by modern fishermen. This summer, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL), in association with The City of St. John's and Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, is looking at this historic space in search of folklore, memories, and old photographs.

In my second research position with HFNL, I will be spending my summer in Quidi Vidi Village. There I will get to know the people of the village whose families may have settled there hundreds of years ago or who may have moved in more recently. The purpose of the Memories of Quidi Vidi project is twofold: to create an oral history archive of Quidi Vidi and to prepare for Memorial University's Folklore Field School occurring in September 2013.

Quidi Vidi Village has a rich historical background that has been well documented.

However, missing from this history, are the stories from the people who grew up, lived, and worked there. By creating a public archive of oral histories this would be remedied. Our goal is to help the members of the community share memories about what is important and significant to them. This way future generations and visitors alike can see the community through the eyes of its people. As a result, I will be sitting down with residents to hear their stories, catch their memories, and record their histories.



The work that is completed over the course of the summer will help promote Quidi Vidi Village in various ways. Displays for tourists visiting Quidi Vidi will be created showcasing some of the stories and memories recorded. A series of audio clips, as well as storyboards, may be placed throughout the community in an effort to showcase the local residents. Visitors and locals will also have the chance to view all of our findings by visiting the Quidi Vidi Village Foundation office in the Quidi Vidi Plantation, which will house a complete archive of all collected materials for future reference.

Memorial University's Folklore Field School begins in Quidi Vidi Village on September 9, 2013. This program will have eight to nine graduate level students in the Department of Folklore spending three weeks in the Village to document buildings, create oral histories, learn about the province, and gain skills that they will use as a foundation for their education and future careers.

The project will continue until the end of September 2013 when the MUN Field School comes to a close. However, all documents, from both HFNL and the Field School, will be available to the public at the Quidi Vidi Village Foundation office in Quidi Vidi as well as on the MUN Digital Archive.

If you have something to share, or would like to help in some way, please contact me, Joelle, by phone at 1 888 739 1829 ext 7 or, by email, [joelle@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:joelle@heritagefoundation.ca).

*Photos by Joelle Carey.*





## ICH Workshops in South East Bight

*By Nicole Penney*

Pillow tops are square-shaped textiles woven from wool using a wooden frame, made by Newfoundland women and men. Not long ago I learned how to weave pillow tops from Elizabeth Murphy who learned how to make pillow tops, or “bake apple blossom cushions” as she knows them, from her family in the 1960s.

With the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador’s Intangible Cultural Heritage Office, I have continued to pass along the skills for making this traditional craft. We have offered several workshops since the first one in November 2012 and recently I had the pleasure of visiting South East Bight, a small isolated fishing community off the coast of Placentia Bay on the Burin Peninsula. I was invited by the principal of St. Anne’s School, Peggy Lewis, to teach her students how to make pillow tops as an end of the school year activity. The group was made up of nine students ranging from five to fifteen years old.

While South East Bight is not an island, you have to get a ferry there, as they don’t have roads suitable for cars. After driving down the Heritage Run to Petite Forte, I hopped on the ferry for the half hour run to the Bight.



Upon arrival I was immediately greeted by a pleasant young man named Jeremy on an all terrain vehicle. He had a trailer hitched on the back where he loaded up all my workshop supplies. I hopped on the ATV and away we went up to the teacher’s cabin where I would be staying with Peggy and her colleague Stephanie Grandy, during my visit.

After a tour of South East Bight and a hearty supper, I taught a small group of six women from the community how to make pillow tops. For this workshop we used larger, more traditional size frames. I recently constructed smaller frames for the students. This makes the activity less time consuming and more accessible to younger children.

I love how social pillow top making can be. We listened to music, drank tea and chatted up a storm while making ours. The ladies consulted each other on colour choices and helped each other while doing the activity. The completed pillow tops were passed around and the ladies remarked on how pretty they all were, what the pillow tops could be used for and where in their houses they would put their own.

The next morning I went to the school to teach the students. I did an activity I like to call “mini giant squid” with a couple of the younger students, Emily and Brandon. This simple craft is constructed from yarn but the real fun comes in decorating and dressing them up.

After we finished out mini giant squid, I began the pillow top activity with the older children. They caught onto it very quickly as many of the knots used in making pillow tops are similar to those used in mending nets, an activity some of the children had done. Much like the community members, the students listened to music and joked and chatted while weaving their pillow tops. The older kids automatically helped the younger ones and everyone seemed to have a great time picking out fun colours, weaving them and then seeing the fuzzy pom poms come together at the end.



When we had finished, the students, much like the adults, huddled over each other's pillow tops and remarked on the great job everyone had done while they complemented colour patterns and pom pom fluffiness.

After we finished up the activity and school let out, I was given a lift back to the ferry where I met with Peggy and Stephanie. The teachers leave on Fridays and arrive back in South East Bight Monday morning, weather permitting. We had beautiful weather for the ferry ride back to Petite Forte.

I was only in South East Bight for a day and a half but I had a wonderful visit. When walking around the community there are moments when you feel as though you have been transported back in time and it's easy to lose yourself in the beautiful scenery of the place. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to go to such a community and share the knowledge and skills to produce this traditional craft.



## Public Advisory

### Designers Sought for the Development of a Helicopter Memorial

In 2011 the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador committed funding to develop a memorial to commemorate two tragic helicopter crashes related to the province's offshore oil industry – Cougar Flight 491 in 2009 and a Universal Helicopter flight in 1985.

A Helicopter Memorial Committee, made up of representatives from families of victims from these two incidents, industry, labour and government was formed in 2013 to guide the project and to make recommendations to government on an appropriate design and location for the memorial. A budget of \$330,000 has been earmarked with a targeted completion date of February 2014. The memorial will be located within St. John's.

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, which is providing financial administration for the project, is issuing a public call for individuals/teams with an interest in providing design-build services for the memorial project. The selection of a final design will follow a two-stage process with the call for expressions of interest being the first stage.

A shortlist will be developed from the Expressions of Interest with three individuals/teams being selected to develop a proposal concept. The second stage will see the selection of a winning design with the successful candidate being awarded the contract to design and build the memorial. The deadline for submission of expressions of interest is July 2, 2013.

Interested individuals or teams may acquire a Terms of Reference from the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador website at [www.heritagefoundation.ca](http://www.heritagefoundation.ca)

*Any inquiries may be directed to:*

Jerry Dick, Director, Heritage Division,  
Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation  
email: [jerrydick@gov.nl.ca](mailto:jerrydick@gov.nl.ca)  
Phone: 709-729-7589



## Looking Back: A Year in the ICH Office

*By Dale Jarvis, with assistance from Nicole Penney and Joelle Carey*

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador has been working on its annual report for 2012-2013, and as part of that, we've been looking back at what we've done over the past year. I thought it was worthwhile to share some of that information here, and give people a sense of the scope of the work we've been involved with recently

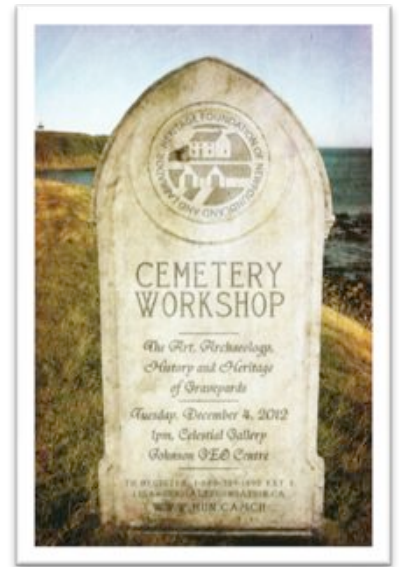
Efforts to preserve Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) within a community context face many challenges. There is a need to collect, document and archive cultural information, but this must be balanced by the ability of those tradition bearers, groups and communities to share, use, re-shape, and transmit such information.

To help with this, the ICH office has been working on training projects, celebrations and workshop celebrating different aspects of culture, and giving opportunities for tradition bearers to pass on skills and knowledge

In 2012/2013, the ICH office worked on several projects designed to provide targeted training sessions to community groups engaged in ICH documentation. These included a training workshop for graduate students enrolled in the public folklore program at MUN, teaching them how to organize a community workshop; a workshop on community memory maps instructed by Marlene Creates; a day long workshop on cemetery conservation and preservation, held at the Geo Centre; and workshops on Google mapping and project planning with the Arnold's Cove heritage group.

In addition, the office undertook a telephone-based survey of ICH training needs in the province. The intent of the survey was to provide the ICH Office with information required to ensure we are effectively responding to community needs when it comes to the preservation, documentation and celebration of Newfoundland and Labrador's intangible cultural heritage. HFNL staff spoke with a range of cultural institutions across the province such as archives, museums, heritage/historical societies, churches and community groups.

Work continued in partnership with Memorial University's Digital Archives Initiative, with numerous photos, videos, and audio interviews added to topic collections including Forestry, Baskets and Basket making, Pillow Tops, Skateboarding, High Steel, and Nursing. Community oral history collections were expanded, particularly Heart's Content, with numerous oral history media files added related to the new Registered Heritage District in the area.



On August 4, 2012, the fourth annual Provincial Folklife Festival took place in Bonavista, Newfoundland. The festival focused on make and break engines - the first type of boat motor to grace our rugged shores.

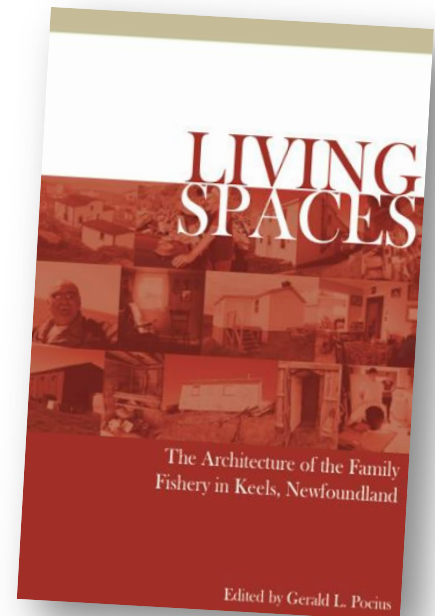
Make and break engines were popular from the early 1900s until the mid to late 1960s but the introduction of faster inboard engines decreased their usage. To honor these engines that helped shape our fishery, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador found people still passionate about these hearty little engines and invited them to celebrate together at the Make and Break Festival.

The festival featured a make and break flotilla, a parts swap and, in addition to approximately 100 spectators, about 40 enthusiasts came out to meet each other, talk engines, and show off their motors.



Most new students spend their first weeks of school in stuffy classrooms. But in a new program through the Department of Folklore at Memorial University, new graduate students spent their first days exploring the a small Bonavista Bay fishing community. During the last three weeks of September, 2012, the Department of Folklore introduced a new course for incoming graduate students on cultural documentation techniques, run in cooperation with the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The field school examined how outmigration and gentrification affected the traditional cultural landscape of the Bonavista region, focusing on the last two inshore fishing families in the community of Keels. Students lived in the town, and worked to document buildings, including homes, fisheries buildings and root cellars. Along the way they interacted with and interviewed locals about their lives and work. The results of the field school, including architectural drawings and descriptions of some of the spaces studied have been put together in a booklet. "Living Spaces: The Architecture of the Family Fishery in Keels, Newfoundland," edited by Gerald Pocius.



The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University's Public Folklore 6740 class presented a Pillow Top workshop at Cochrane St. United Church on Saturday, Nov. 3rd, 2012. Woven with wool on wooden frames, these Newfoundland textiles were traditionally crafted by lumber camp workers to be gifted to their sweethearts or sewn onto pillows, used as throws or even placemats. Today, this handcrafted tradition is being carried on by Elizabeth Murphy of the Burin Peninsula. A dozen interested community members participated in a hands-on pillow top workshop led by Elizabeth. The IICH Office also created a pillow top collection on MUN's Digital Archive with oral histories and pictures of pillow tops.

When most people think about the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador they think about Jiggs Dinner, toutons, and salt fish but rarely do they think about cabbage rolls, Czech gingerbread, and sauerkraut. Immigrant culture is an important part of our community that often goes unnoticed. Here in Newfoundland there is a strong international community, which is slowly growing. In March the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, in cooperation with Dr. Mariya Lesiv (Memorial University), celebrated the culture of East-Europeans in Newfoundland. A series of oral history interviews, conducted in St. John's, lead up to the Newfiki Festival, centered us on exploring and celebrating the culture of new East-European-Canadians from the former Socialist countries in Newfoundland.

We have a lot of exciting new projects in the works, but we are always open to new ideas and requests from communities. If you have an idea for a project, or want assistance running an intangible cultural heritage workshop or program in your community, email Dale Jarvis at [ich@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:ich@heritagefoundation.ca) or call toll free at 1-888-739-1892 ext2.

Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador would like to announce an upcoming workshop:

**"Intangible Cultural Heritage: Digitization"**

Date: 9:00 - 4:30; Tuesday, 25 June 2013

Instructors: Dale Jarvis, Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Officer,  
and Lisa Wilson, Heritage Districts Officer; Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Registration fee per workshop: \$70 for MANL members, \$95 for non-members

Location: MANL Offices; 15 Hallett Crescent; St. John's, NL.

To register please contact the MANL office at: [manl@nf.aibn.com](mailto:manl@nf.aibn.com).



Intangible Cultural Heritage Update – Subscribe online at <http://doodledaddle.blogspot.com>  
Editor: Dale Jarvis, ICH Development Officer, Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador  
PO Box 5171, St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5V5 [ich@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:ich@heritagefoundation.ca)